

Tirana, in English for Abroad, Jan. 13, 1947

Summary:

Dealing with the obstacles which the U. S. Government has put in the way of Albanians living in the U. S. who wished to send help to their fellow countrymen in Albania, Bashkimi quotes information received from the U. S. regarding the steps taken by Albanians for official permission to forward their aid. Rebuffed by the Headquarters of the Red Cross, officials of the Albanian relief fund applied to the Consultative Committee for voluntary relief to foreign countries at the State Department asking that money and medical supplies be sent to the Albanian Red Cross or by the International Red Cross. In a letter dated October 24, 1946, the director of the Consultative Committee said that neither of these ways was reasonable; dispatch of medical supplies was inadvisable at the time and money should be preserved in the fund until it could be used "to bring about benefits in accordance with the purpose of those who have donated it".

In October, 1946, the Albanian relief fund received a cable from the Albanian Red Cross informing them that floods had done great damage and asking for aid. The managers of the fund approached the U.S. Government and Red Cross but on the 13th of November as they were about to leave for Washington a telegram was received from the Consultative Committee advising them to postpone their visit considering the withdrawal of the U. S. Government mission from Albania. The managers of the fund sent a cable to Albania explaining that they had done their best but were unable to send any help without the approval of the U. S. Government.

The U. S. Government is continuously hampering the dispatch of aid to Albania from the Albanian colonies of the U. S. Particularly significant is the fact that the U. S. Red Cross which is a non-political and philanthropic organization and which not only should not hamper the dispatch of aid to our flood-stricken population but ought to have facilitated it, continuously placed obstacles in the way. The telegram of November 13 in which the Consultative Committee mentions the withdrawal of the U. S. mission from Albania verifies to our people and to all democratic opinion that the U. S. authorities connected the dispatch of aid to flood victims which is purely humanitarian with a political incident and with the policy of pressure which has been applied against Albania.